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FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2745  
INFO RUEHXX/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 002405

SIPDIS

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NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE; NEA/IPA FOR  
WILLIAMS/GREENE/WATERS/WAECHTER; NSC FOR  
ABRAMS/DORAN/LOGERFO; TREASURY FOR NUGENT/ADKINS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/08/2016  
TAGS: [EFIN](#) [PREL](#) [KWBG](#) [JO](#)  
SUBJECT: PALESTINIAN BANKERS' SECURITY CONCERNS

REF: JERUSALEM 2245

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Senior representatives of Palestinian and regional banks operating in the West Bank and Gaza Strip expressed their security concerns to USAIDoffs and EconOffs June 7 over possible violent attacks against bank branch offices in response to non-payment of salaries (reftel). Arab Bank Regional Manager Mazen Abu Hamdan and Cairo-Amman Bank Regional Manager Joseph Nesnas related several recent incidents in Jenin, Bethlehem and Gaza that had resulted in the temporary closures of branch offices and successful appeals to President Abbas for additional security. The most publicized event was the June 5 incident in Gaza where an individual, who did not have an Arab Bank account, walked into a Gaza branch of the Arab Bank, climbed the stairs to the third floor manager's office, spilled water on his desk, and demanded his salary. Arab Bank then closed its four branches in Gaza while it successfully appealed to President Abbas for security forces to provide 24 hour protection to the branches.

12. (C) In his June 7 press comments and June 8 discussion with ConGenOffs, Palestinian Monetary Authority Governor George Abed spoke of his regular and constructive contacts with the Governor of the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) and the Chairman of the Arab Bank. His most recent conversation with both dealt with a Jordanian government warning that, in response to security concerns, Jordanian banks operating in the West Bank and Gaza may close their doors. (Note: Abed complained that the June 5 incident at an Arab Bank branch in Gaza which had prompted the warning had been blown out of proportion by local press. End note.) Abed said he had secured agreement with the CBJ to coordinate future announcements related to banking activities in the Palestinian areas. He added that the warning was helpful in highlighting for Palestinians the adverse consequences of violence directed at all banks.  
WALLES